



**USDA Federal State Marketing Improvement Program
“Creating a Marketing Tool-Kit for Pacific Coast Shellfish”**

**Final Report
November 2003**

Phase One: Hired Advertising/Marketing Agency

The first step in this project was the development of a Request for Proposals and selection of a marketing agency. The Marketing Committee selected Stanton & Everybody based upon their level of experience in the agricultural sector, their enthusiasm for shellfish in particular, and their creative ideas that were aligned well with where the industry is poised to go. A contract with Stanton & Everybody was signed on September 20, 2002.

Phase Two: Developed Marketing Strategy; Identified Components of Marketing Tool-Kit

Background materials were provided to Stanton & Everybody to familiarize them with industry issues, current market conditions and available marketing materials (produced through WSDA Marketing Grant.) The FSMIP 2001 Marketing Report served well as the foundation for the strategies that have been developed.

On September 29, a grower workshop was held with participation from Alaska, Washington, Oregon and California growers. Rick Stanton provided an overview of marketing issues and strategies for the growers consideration and provided the growers an opportunity to further identify current marketing issues, conditions, needs, constraints and goals they were facing. A “Client Brand Strategy Development” packet was provided by Stanton with a series of questions growers were asked to answer, both during the workshop and later in writing.

It was the consensus of the workshop participants that the strategy behind the marketing project should be the development of “brand” identification for Pacific Coast shellfish. Working with the Marketing Committee, Rick Stanton developed a Client Brand Strategy (see attached) which identified the following:

- Elements of a successful branding program
- What growers were currently doing to behave as a brand
- What growers are currently doing that compromises brand consistency
- Specific problems, challenges and opportunities currently facing the brand including both internal and external forces

- Primary and secondary demographic and psychographic target audiences
- What consumers currently believe about the brand
- What we want the consumer to believe
- Key position of the growers
- What supports that key position at present
- Media mix that best supports identified strategies and short term tactical challenges
- What type of promotional involvement supports the brand
- How to keep the brand fresh, relevant and competitive for the future.
- The best “brand personality” and correct tone and manner for advertising

It should be noted that when the proposal for this project was written, Phase 2 included identification of optimum target markets, with a presumption that this would involve the retail sector and end-consumers. During strategy development it was decided resources would be better spent targeting the trade sector.

Step Three: Developed Components of Marketing Tool-Kit

As determined through Phase Two, Stanton & Everybody created the following tools for creating brand recognition for Pacific Coast shellfish:

- A new logo (see attached) depicting the small family-run, environmentally dependent nature of the industry.
- A series of food shots that depict the environmental and culinary benefits associated with shellfish. The photos are high quality/resolution, intended for use in trade magazines, but they lend themselves to a variety of other mediums, as needed by growers. (See attached.)
- Full-color series of ads developed for use in trade magazines. (See attached)
- Website redesigned to match new image and to be more user-friendly, especially for buyers and consumers. (Cover web-page attached. Also view at www.pcsga.org.)
- Introductory (test) kit prepared for trades with:
 - Cover introductory letter
 - Request for recipes (respondents linked to PCSGA web site)
 - Promotional poster
 - Oyster brochure*
 - Shellfish brochure*
 - Shellfish availability poster (Map and flavor profiles)*
 - Questionnaire on usefulness of materials

Step Four: Launch Marketing Tool Kit

All Tool Kit materials listed above, and the Marketing Strategy, were sent to growers, including ideas on how to make use of them. The businesses that manufacture boxes, labels and tags for growers were provided with the new logo in their preferred formats. (See sample.)

*(*These materials produced through WSDA Marketing Grant)*

An entirely revamped website is now available on line and far more accessible, user friendly, and visually appealing than the previous site, which had grown difficult to negotiate and had little marketing value. The new web site has been designed with an eye to promoting shellfish to the trades and consumers.

Thirty members of the trades, including restaurants, buyers (distributors/brokers), and retail seafood markets were identified as targets to be introduced to the marketing tool kits and to provide feedback on the usefulness of materials available. The kit components were assembled, rolled and secured with blue and gold ribbons, and mailed in eye-catching poster tubes in an effort to attract their attention to the materials.

Step Five: Finalize Tool-Kit Prototype for Replication; Marketing Plan Finalized

The Marketing Committee selected one of the ads, prepared by Stanton and Everybody, (with amendments) for use in an upcoming issue of Seafood Business Magazine (a top trade ad medium). A group of growers have decided to go in cooperatively to place a full page, full color ad to coincide with the Boston Seafood Show. This ad was also converted into a promotional full color poster that has been useful in a variety of venues, including special events such as Oysterfest, Elliott's Oyster New Years, the Seattle COOKS tradeshow, and individual contact with members of the trade.

A final Marketing Workshop was held on October 10, during the PCSGA Annual Conference, to roll out the Marketing Tool Kit to the growers, including presentations by Howard Johnson, a seafood marketer that assesses trends in seafood marketing; and Rick Stanton, who discussed the Marketing Strategy in detail and provided growers an opportunity to ask questions. As a result of this meeting, a critical mass of growers decided to actively pursue a cooperative branding strategy that encompasses the development of uniform quality standards and cooperative mechanisms that will allow the growers to benefit from an umbrella marketing/branding program, while also maintaining their own personal business brand identity. Feedback from the targeted trades indicate they find the materials useful, particularly for educating wait staff.

This project has provided a strong foundation for launching a branding program, including not just the new image and promotional materials, but especially the grower involvement and cooperation necessary to bring the strategy into reality.

For more information contact:

Robin Downey

Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association

120 State Ave NE #142

Olympia, WA 98501

360-754-2744 or pcsga@pcsga.org